

Friendship through gardening

JUNE CLUB MEETING

Cancelled due to COVID19 restrictions.

50th ANNIVERSARY PARTY

Tentatively rescheduled for Saturday 28 November.

BUS TOUR

Tentatively planned for early October.

Find the latest news on:



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Contributions welcomed

From the President

It has been brought to my attention that I am in the minority, probably. I am enjoying lockdown! Having lots of time for working in the garden has been wonderful. Except for the rainy days lately, I've spent most of the enforced home-time out in the garden. The rain has been great for the garden too, as I enjoy sitting inside watching my newly-planted hedge growing in the newly-constructed garden outside my window. It does mean that the next rock wall is taking longer than expected to build, but my knees appreciate the enforced rest.

I hope there are other gardeners in our Club who have appreciated the time at home, too. Now that the weather is cooler there's a lot to do out in the garden. This is the best time of year for preparing gardens for bare-root stock that will be arriving in nurseries in the coming months. The next rock-walled garden I'm building is in preparation for three new bare-rooted trees I've ordered from Welby Garden Centre, Cercis 'Forest Pansy'. They are lovely, small, deciduous trees that will, I hope, improve the look of our entrance.

Steve Press has been marvellous in keeping us all in touch during the lockdown with his weekly emails and encouragement to stay in touch through social media as well. Thank you, Steve.

This week the Committee is having an actual meeting, not a virtual one, in preparation for getting back to regular monthly meetings of the Club. Once the hall is re-opened and the authorisation to hold large gatherings is okayed, we'll be back together again. It will be wonderful to be able to mingle, standing around the morning tea table, chatting about inconsequential things, enjoying life. Hopefully, we can bask in the novelty for some time before it becomes ordinary again.

In the meantime, enjoy the last of the autumn colour around town and happy gardening.

Robin



Cercis 'Forest Pansy'

Our Social Media – by Steve Press



We have 3 social media accounts – Facebook, YouTube and Instagram. How they are viewed tells us something about our club.

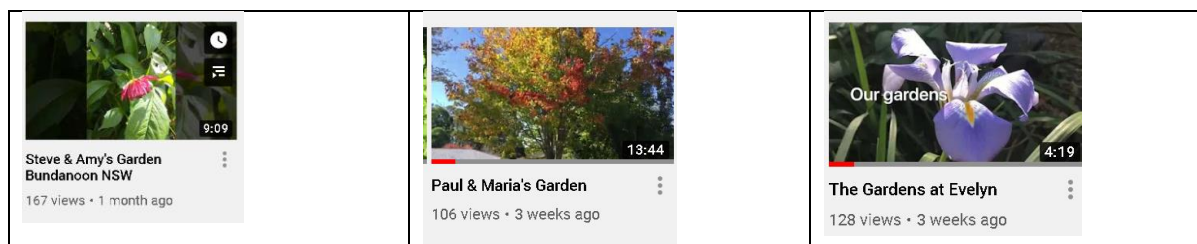


Facebook is our No. 1 social media with 164 followers and our posts reaching around 300 people each time. Our most popular post was advertising our anniversary party , reaching 1,369 people. The post celebrating Laurel Hones OAM came second reaching 1,100 people and the post reporting a phone call from our founding president Beryl Gosbell reached 537 people. 77% of our readers are women with 60% over 45 years of age. Almost all our readers are from Australia, but we have 3 readers from overseas (Philippines, Netherlands and South Africa). In Australia our readers are roughly split between the villages of the Southern Highlands and Sydney.



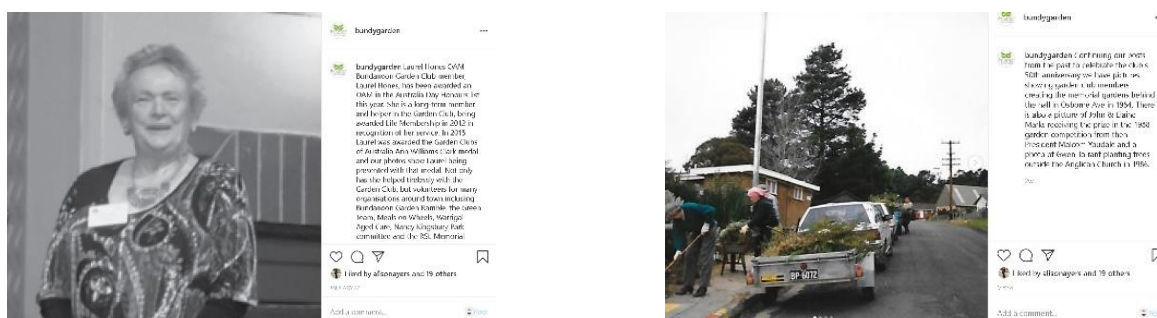
For YouTube, our channel has had 851 views. The most popular videos are shown

below –



Viewers spent about 3 minutes looking at our videos (so no long videos). 80% of our viewers are from Australia (3 viewers even used the translate function!). 100% of our viewers are over 60, so our YouTube viewers are much older on average than our Facebook readers. We have a much better gender mix on YouTube with 57% of our viewers female. Our biggest day was the 27th April when we had four videos published. About 40% of our viewers view the videos on a mobile phone with another 40% on a computer and 20% on a tablet. Our viewers are roughly split down the middle on the operating system they like with an almost 50/50 split between iOS/Mac and Windows/Android.

For Instagram we have 161 followers . Our most popular posts with 20 likes each were the posts celebrating Laurel Hones OAM and the recent post from the archives showing early work on the memorial garden.



Veggiemen – June 2020

Produce from the veggie garden is a little sparse at the moment. Carrots, Spinach, and Leeks are cropping, and stored Potatoes, Onions and Pumpkins, plus frozen Beans, have to be supplemented with bought vegetables! Lettuce and Cucumbers in the greenhouse are finishing, and I have planted a Mesclun mix of Salad Leaves and Radishes which were very successful last winter, but will not be ready for around six weeks. I have sown the green manure on next season's potato bed. The Sugar Snap Peas and Broad Beans are growing well, so looking forward to an early spring harvest. The brassica bed looks healthy, but looking back at last year I have noted that, with the interruption of the bush fires, my first broccoli and cabbage planting this time was a month later, and by now we should already have a crop to pick.

Planting in June

Beans - broad beans, fava beans	Sow seed	Harvest from September
Garlic	Plant cloves	Harvest from October
Mustard greens (also gai choy)	Sow seed	Harvest from July
Onion	Plant out seedlings	
	or sow seed	Harvest from November
Radish	Sow seed	Harvest from July
Spinach (also English spinach)	Sow seed	Harvest from July
Spring onions (also Scallions, Bunching onions, Welsh onion)	Sow seed	Harvest from August

Or you can plant **Microgreens**

Microgreens are basically many of the same leafy greens as are used for salad mixes but are cut at a smaller stage and only harvested once. They are eaten as thin, delicate plants, the smallest possible variation on salad greens and herbs. They provide texture and colour when used as garnish, or exciting flavours when used as part of salad mixes or are added to sandwiches.

Which Microgreens Seeds can you grow?

Some common varieties include amaranth, basil, beets, broccoli, cabbage, celery, chard, chervil, coriander/cilantro, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, mustard, parsley, peas, radish, rocket/arugula, spinach, and sorrel. However, you are certainly not limited to these!

Where to Grow Microgreens

You can grow them indoors on a well-lit bench or outdoors on a covered deck or in a shade house. Indoors start them in a warm place like a kitchen then once they sprout they should be moved to a window or sunny spot.

How to Grow Microgreens

Microgreens are grown quickly from seeds in good light with adequate moisture. They are usually sown in a soil medium or seed compost, and harvested before they reach full size. Sow the seed in any punnet, pot or tray with drainage, fairly thickly, and keep the surface damp using a spray bottle. For a warm humid environment for the seeds to germinate, cover the seeds with the lid if in a punnet, or add a clear plastic bag over the top of the pot or tray with holes snipped in the top for airflow. Once germinated, the seeds have used up their internal store of food to grow. So at this point apply a seaweed solution to feed the plants with trace elements. This improves flavour and boosts nutrition.

How to Harvest Microgreens

Microgreens are usually harvested when there are four or more leaves. Cut the shoots just above ground level with scissors. Some types will regrow and can be cut several times. Afterwards the tray contents can be added to the compost heap.



Ode to Autumn



Amy Press

Do you know your eucalypts? Or will our quiz stump you?



<https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2020-05-20/eucalypt-quiz-iconic-australian/12026416>

Microgreens



EASY GUIDE TO GROWING MICROGREENS



For full information about Microgreens, the benefits, varieties and a 4 step guide, go to: <https://themicrogardener.com/easy-guide-to-growing-microgreens/>

Great time to try pickling



Being in isolation might be a great time to try something new. In this series, we get the basics on hobbies and activities to start while you're spending more time at home.

<https://theconversation.com/great-time-to-try-pickling-135052>

Out and About – Feast or Famine!

Last month we enjoyed a feast of offerings from members, but this month I mostly have had to rely on Committee Members (thanks for stepping up!)

There is certainly nothing like sharing our news and experiences over morning tea at Garden Club meetings, and hopefully we can get back to social contact in the very near future. Meantime, if there is anything you would like to share, it will be very much appreciated.

Thanks to Tessa Spencer for designing the new front page for this Newsletter.

David (Editor) - dghumphrey@hotmail.com

How England Got Its Curvy Cucumbers Straightened Out

The cucumber straightener was invented by the great engineer George Stephenson (1781–1848), a keen fruit grower who took great pride in the growth of his cucumbers. Stephenson ordered blown glass cylinders to be made at his Newcastle steam engine factory for his garden at Tapton House, Derbyshire, where he spent the last ten years of his life. The elongated glass funnel was placed over the cucumber at an early stage to encourage the fruit to grow straight. Technological innovations in the 19th century had a great impact on food production in Britain. The straight cucumber, a purely aesthetic advancement, symbolises the Victorian obsession with rationalising nature.



Straight cucumbers are still in demand. Supermarkets use a simple test to determine whether a cucumber is straight enough to sell: lay the cucumber flat on a surface and if a hand fits comfortably under the bend it is discarded. Today, a bendy cucumber is a home-grown cucumber.

Why bees are finally getting a break



Lockdowns have put a number of insect-harming practices on hold, creating a friendlier world for wild bees - and conservationists hope some of these changes could be here to stay. Read more:

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200506-why-lockdown-is-helping-bees?ocid=ww.social.link.email>

How to Grow Hibiscus

CHOOSE A VARIETY

Choosing a variety is not just a case of picking a flower colour; there are single, semi-double and double blooms in a wide variety of shades from soft yellow and burnt orange, red and burgundy to mauve.



WHERE TO PLANT

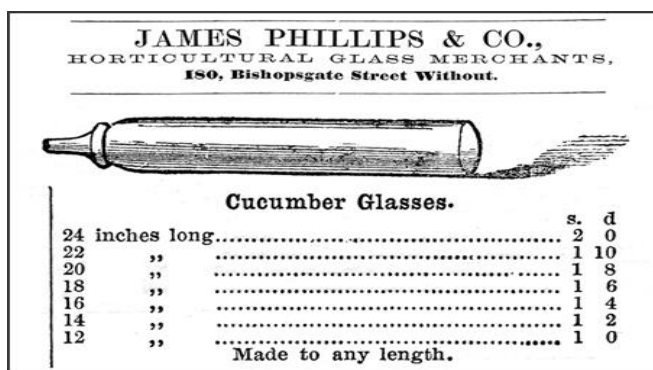
Choosing a position with at least 6-8 hours a day of sunshine is the key to productive flowering. A full sun position is best, out of any strong winds. Your hibiscus will perform best in well-drained, slightly acidic soil. If your soil type is heavy clay or light sandy, you will need to improve the soil before planting. **TIP: DIG IN SOME COMPOSTED POULTRY MANURE INTO THE SOIL WHEN PLANTING.**

WATERING

Hibiscus love water and respond really well to be watered regularly, especially during the growing season. Keep the soil moist, but not soggy with a weekly watering and plenty of mulch.

FERTILISING

Because hibiscus bloom on new growth, it is important to feed regularly. Applications of Rose & Flower every 4-6 weeks during Spring and through to Winter will ensure masses of flowers. **TIP: PRUNING REGULARLY WILL ENCOURAGE MORE BLOOMS**



The upcoming trip to Rookwood Cemetery and the Rose garden at Parramatta Park.



Glennys Clark was to be the guest speaker at the April meeting and speak to us about the heritage roses at Rookwood Cemetery, and hopefully whet our interest for a visit, but because of Covid19 Glennys was unable to come. Anyway as suggested I have gone ahead and booked Glennys to conduct a talk at Rookwood Cemetery for the garden club regarding heritage roses on 22 October 2020 and have booked Marulan Coaches for our transport - morning tea included in the cost of the coach. We then plan to visit a lovely rose garden near the entrance to Parramatta Park. There is a small cafe there where we can purchase lunch. There is no cost for the talk at Rookwood or to go to Parramatta Park so the only cost will be lunch and the cost of the coach. Something to look forward to if restrictions are sufficiently relaxed.

Dale Hancock

Trish Badami (Treasurer)

Good Morning everyone.

Cash Flow Summary for May 2020

Opening Balance:.. \$16,124.96

Income:\$118.00

Expenditure:.....\$4,168.75

Closing Balance:....\$12,074.21

No I didn't book a holiday!!!

We opened a Sub account with BDCU to separate our 50th Anniversary Garden Party The Ticket Sales \$3,635.00.

Keep well and keep warm everyone.
Trish Badami (Treasurer)

50th ANNIVERSARY

The Garden Party in March to celebrate the Anniversary was postponed.

The tentative new date will be **SATURDAY 28th NOVEMBER** (if COVID-19 restrictions are lifted by then)

Three other 50th Anniversary Events are being planned (dates yet to be determined):

Official "Opening of the Seat" in Nancy Kingsbury Memorial Park

Significant Tree Planting – Wollemi Pine in Gardens of Hotel (because the meeting to establish the Garden Club was held there)

Planting of 50 Casuarinas – Grounds of Bundanoon Club (the number of trees is significant)

Club Library

Our Garden Club has a wonderful collection of books, magazines and DVDs for members to borrow and enjoy. Unfortunately, they are locked up in the Village Hall, due to COVID restrictions, and not available at the moment.

However, the magazine subscriptions continue and the following magazines are available for loan.

Gardens Illustrated (UK) -
January, February and March 2020

Organic Gardener –
Early Summer 2019, Autumn 2020 and Early Winter 2020

Gardening Australia
April, May and June 2020

If you'd like to borrow an issue, let me know and I can deliver it to your home.

There are also lots of library items out on loan which are due back the next meeting. Check your bookshelves, I'll email reminders.

Suggestion –

Is there a gardening book you've enjoyed or found useful? We would love suggestions for new books for the library – preferably not too large so they are easy to take home!

Tessa Spencer - tessasp2@gmail.com

Parrots and Roses



The recent rain has been very welcome, but this flock of nine King Parrots (see if you can find the ninth one) decided that a good place to shelter from the rain was on the railing of the back deck at the President's house in Ben Nevis Circuit. The cat went berserk watching from the window. The President's happy helper (me!) will now have to clean up the deck!

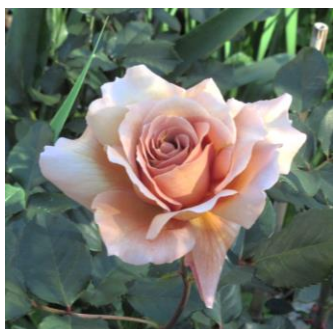
Before the rains, rose bushes around the village had a magnificent display of the second autumn flush. Here are a few in the newly established rose garden at the President's house. It was dug only last year and the bare-rooted bushes planted last winter, so they have done well for their first season. One of the reasons why is the heavy netting to keep the bl—dy lyre-birds out!



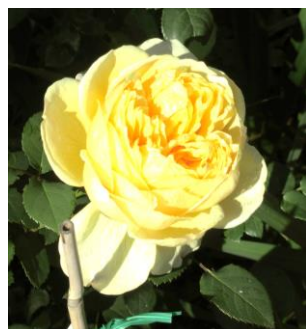
'Black Beauty'



'By Any Other Name'



'Julia's Rose'



'Charlotte'

Bruce Marshall

The Armchair Gardener

During lockdown our gardens have been solace, safety and distraction. But on days when I can't be outside, I turn to our various screens for a garden fix. Repeats of Gardening Australia only go so far. I've discovered a trove of BBC Gardener's World on YouTube. Fifteen years or so of episodes and if you think Monty Don has never aged, you should see him in shows from 2006! The planting advice on the show holds true, some things never change, and watching the evolution of Monty's attitude to poisons such as glyphosate and the mainstreaming of sustainable gardening practices is fascinating.



Rich Brothers

My true delight, however, is another UK show. Garden Rescue pits Chelsea Flower Show darlings the Rich Brothers against garden designers Charlie Dimmock and Arit Anderson. The competitive format is stupid, the narration makes me want to scream, and yet I can't turn away. This show will have you yelling at the screen. Don't do that! That's such a wrong choice! You've ruined it! That's hideous! Invariably the homeowners receiving the garden rescue have no clue and you know that within six months the gardens will return to wasteland. This is glorious armchair gardening, all judgement and no lifting. Despite the many awful moments, I've learned quite a few garden landscaping tricks from the designers, and the plant selections are often very relatable for our cool climate gardens.

If you have some time to squander, take a look and prepare to binge. This link takes you to Garden Rescue, Monty, and many other great gardening shows on YouTube.

<https://tinyurl.com/tigertigergardenrescue>

Submitted by Alison Ayers

Plants for FREE!

By Phillip "Ted" Ayers.

I love growing plants from seeds, but I also love giving the garden a head start by propagating. Here's a few of my favourite propagating methods.

Propagating Roses

If like me you love roses you want a good amount to make a splash. This can get quite expensive even if you're buying bare rooted roses at the start of the season. I've started taking cuttings and I've found some interesting ways to get the best result. You can of course, just take a hardwood cutting. Look for stems that are about the thickness of a pencil, cut into lengths about 15cm above a bud, the bottom cut should be straight and the top cut at a 45 degree angle. The top cut should be above a bud. Strip away the



leaves and simply pot them up with about half the stem below the surface and half above. Pop them in the green house or make a simple cold

frame using a plastic tub and cling film top and keep in a sunny sheltered place. You should get about a 50% success rate with this process. If you're after a better success rate, you can try aerial rooting. I'll be trying this method over winter, you'd probably have a better success rate at the start of spring, but I have some leggy roses that I would be pruning anyway. You simply take a small single serve plastic juice bottle, cut in half and then cut both pieces length ways. The bottom section also has to be cut to the centre. This is going to be the medium/ soil container. Look to take your cutting from a strong stem that's about the thickness of a pencil and that won't flop. Make a 5cm cut. Cut half of the bark or flesh of the rose stem. Here's the unique part – get a piece of banana skin and wrap that around the cut stem. The banana peel will apparently act as a hormone stimulus. Wrap your bottom section of your juice bottle around the stem, fill with propagating mix or a loose soil (with perlite or sharp sand for easy drainage) then place the top half over and using garden twine or cable ties to seal the cut bottles together. Water well and by spring you should have a new rose bush!

The easiest propagating plants

In our garden we've found that propagating plants has given us full beds over the course of just a year. Some of the easiest plants to propagate are

hydrangeas, salvia, plectranthus, geraniums, fuchsias, azaleas and begonias. We simply take cuttings, above the leaf nodes, strip away the leaves to leave 5cm of clear stem and plant them in seed raising compost. We get the best result if we keep these cuttings in the green house for 2-3 weeks and then they are ready to go into the garden. With plectranthus and geraniums, we usually just cut them, strip back the leaves and pop them straight back in the soil. We have entire beds of plectranthus as an under planting that have come from a cut and come again process.

Propagating veggies

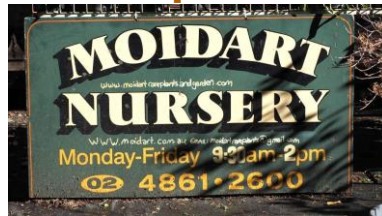
I love using our kitchen scraps to make compost, but I've recently started using some of the scraps as starters for a new crop. So far I've had good success with carrots and leeks, but I'll be trying some other veggies as space becomes available in the beds.

With carrots, simply cut the top off the carrot, keep it moist on a wet paper towel and then just put the carrot tops on the soil in your veggie garden.



You can use a similar method for parsnips, turnips and other root vegetables. With the likes of celery, leeks, fennel and lettuce – use the same method, just inverted. Cut the bottom (the part that would have been in the soil) off, suspend over a container of water with base of the scrap just touching the water and within a week or two, you'll see roots develop. You can just plant these straight in the bed or grow them on in a pot to further develop the roots and to protect the plant from the cooler weather.

Our trip to Moidart Nursery



We love shopping for new and rare plants and there's no better place for a fix than at Moidart Nursery in Bowral and there's

no better time than when they are having a sale (now over, but watch out for the next one). Not only do they have a vast selection of plants, but they also have an incredible knowledge of what works in the Southern Highlands. Cat and I were fascinated to walk the nursery with Jess and Chris. They are amenable, helpful and informative. We also love their informative and often humorous description of the plants. Lines like "...this one could grow in a cupboard, any fool will find success with this plant".



We purchased a few Japanese Kerria Japonica Flore Pleno, Tellima Grandiflora, Pachysandra Aillaris Stylosa. But the big win was a 20" pot with a Spiraea Dolchea ½ price at \$15 (love the serrated leaves and autumn foliage) and a Dicksonia Squarrosa. Not the selection you'd find at Bunnings! With the back of our tiny Fiat 500 full to bursting we drove off, happy and content after a morning in the mist at Moidart Nursey. Hopefully they will open their private gardens in spring.

We also support The Bundanoon Bloomery, The Shrubbery at Exeter, Roots and Leaves and the bulb men of Bowral and Exeter Markets.

Ted Ayers

Prepare your garden for the chilly months ahead

If there was one thing we weren't expecting to have this winter, it was lots of extra time in the garden! And winter is actually an awesome time to prepare the garden for the warmer months of spring and summer. So, what should you do?

We asked **The Fold's** gardening guru, Michael Nichols of [Turf 2 Trees Horticulture](https://www.thefoldsouthernhighlands.com.au/turf-2-trees-horticulture) to put together a month by month guide of tasks we can get done in the winter and there are plenty!

"Now, we have some down time, it's a great time to prepare your gardens for the coming season – weeding, dividing, transplanting, cultivating, composting, mulching and getting on top of pH adjustment," Michael says.

"In simple terms pH is the soil's ability to absorb, retain and release nutrients from the soil to the plant. It's measured with a scale of 1-14 with 7 being the ideal. My lecturer years ago told me this fantastic analogy," says Michael.

"Think of the soil as a giant fridge. In that fridge is everything you need to grow and flourish. When the pH is at 7, the door is wide open for you to get

whatever you need, but when the pH starts to sway towards the acid or alkaline ranges, the door slowly closes. This makes it harder to find the things you need to grow and be healthy."

What else can we do? Here's a list for **JUNE**.

Transplant deciduous stock around the garden while deciduous plants are dormant in the winter.

Bare rooted plants are now readily available in the nurseries so grab a bargain as bare root stock is usually cheaper than the potted or wrapped versions sold at nurseries later in the year.

Clumps of violets can be lifted and divided now. The best flowers are usually on younger stock.

Dahlias can now be lifted and divided if necessary.



Rhubarb is another dormant plant which will benefit from dividing every 3-4 years.

Now is a great time to test all the watering systems in the garden. It's cold I know, but it gives you ample time to fix those faults before you really need the water!

Don't mulch too close to your tree trunks. The excessive continuous moisture around the trunk can cause the trunk or 'collar' to rot.

Large organic matter mulches (leaf mulches, barks, woodchips) starve your plants of nitrogen in the early stages of decomposition. This results in yellowing of the leaves and poor growth of the plant. Make sure your mulch is a few months old before use or sprinkle a fast-acting fertiliser over the area before mulching to counteract this effect.

Winter is the time to complete the pruning and spraying of most orchard trees. Be careful to prune the right wood as you may cut off the coming season's crop.

<https://www.thefoldsouthernhighlands.com.au/the-guide/the-essential-winter-guide-for-your-highlands-garden.html>